No. 4. *On the Formation of Man.*

Pſalm, chap. 139, ver. 14. "I will give thanks unto thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

There are certain men in the world who take a pride in denying the exiſtence of a God, and attribute the formation of all things to chance. Becauſe they can have no conception of a firſt Cauſe and Creator of the Univerſe, who muſt be a ſelf-exiſtent being, that is, a being which never had a beginning: becauſe ſuch a conception is beyond the reach of human underſtanding, they immediately conclude it cannot be; and have the audacity to reaſon on the ways of Providence, and cry out, "Who is the Lord that we ſhould ſerve him?" Not ſo, the royal Prophet, inſpired by the Holy Spirit, he could not refrain, in the elevation of his thoughts, from ſaying, "I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made!"

The ſymmetry of creation, in every point of view, is ſurprizingly proportionate and pleaſing. The animate and inanimate world afford great and glorious proſpects!---The ſcene throughout is wonderfully beautiful!

1. Man was created a being perfectly innocent and pure, in a ſtate little below the angels, ſeated in paradiſe, and furniſhed with every thing that delights the eye and gratifies the taſte. Man, as I

have on a former occasion observed, was destined to live a certain time in this great world, and was to partake of that general end of creation, grow, rise to maturity, bloom, wither, and to die. To carry on this machine through the several stages, and to continue his species to the end of time, God has annexed Pleasures to those functions of the body, necessary to support life, and Pain to the neglect & forbearance of them. Without this spur, man might be neglectful and thus counteract the designs of his Maker, might refrain from food---refrain from marriage---refrain from that tender care necessary for bringing up his children.---Man might die as soon as born, and the human species become extinct in a very short time, but for the pleasures annexed to eating and drinking, and the natural attraction between the sexes implanted for the propagation of the species.

Let the sceptic look into himself and examine his own structure, and his infidelity must drop; nay, he must become religious. It is on this principle that I mean to lay man open to himself, and give him some idea of his formation---Where to begin I know not; and when begun, I shall be at a loss where to end. Man, beautiful as he is in the form we see him, is much more beautiful within; as much more so as is the inside of a watch, than when envelloped in its cases. To enter into a minute examination of all his parts, and shew you the formation of the eye, the structure of the ear, and so on, would be impracticable in the time we have; it would also be ridiculous to attempt it, for unless I had a dissected eye and ear to shew you, with all my endeavours, you would not comprehend it; I must rest satisfied therefore with explaining to you the general design of the several parts combined, as I have already done in speaking of the eye and ear.

If we reflect on the multitude of intentions in the formation of

the ſeveral parts of our bodies, and the qualifications required to fit them for their ſeveral uſes, we muſt ſtand amazed at the wonderful art and providence of the Creator. There are in the human body more than 600 muſcles, each of which has at leaſt ten functions to perform, ſo that theſe organs have not leſs than 6000 ſeveral ends to be obtained; the bones are in number 284, and as each bone is formed for more than 40 different purpoſes, the whole number of ends the Creator had in view, when he gave man bones, are no leſs than 100,000. The ſame may be ſaid of the other parts of the body. Now to imagine ſuch a machine could be compoſed of ſo many parts, to the right form, order, and motion of which ſuch an infinite number of intentions are required, could be made without the contrivance of ſome wiſe agent, muſt, in the higheſt degree, be irrational.

Man is a figure majeſtically graceful. The ſtructure is like a noble edifice ſtanding on columns, uniformly made, raiſed on the arch or bridge of the foot, ſo curiouſly jointed, as to admit of graceful motion. Without a play of the foot, man would ſtalk along, as if he moved on ſtilts; and by the joints of his ancles, knees, and hips, he is able to preſerve that equilibrium or balance that keeps him erect and upright. His arms and hands are wiſely contrived for his uſe and defence; indeed, every part of him is ſo formed and well ſituated, that any alteration in the compages, muſt be for the worſe. Hence it is we ſee no alteration in the human form. Man is always mending and altering his works; but Nature obſerves the ſame tenor. And why? Becauſe her works are ſo perfect, that there is no room for amendment.

Let me point out another wiſe contrivance in the formation of man; this is in his face, which is the index of the mind, and ſpeaks

the language of the heart. View the face of grief and joy, of age and youth, of pain and pleasure, of pride and shame, of avarice and philanthropy.---What contrast do they afford!---How distinctly may be read the blush of innocence and youth, the modest aspect and diffidence of integrity, the distorted view of anger, and the jaundiced eye of jealousy!--Was Nature a blind architect, the faces of men might be as similar as casts in the same mould; but for the purposes of society and the detection of frauds, for the means of keeping men honest to each other, God hath made one countenance so distinguishable from another, that no two faces in the world are absolutely alike. He has also made the voice as distinguishable as the countenance, and has taught the ear to know the one, as he has the eye, the other: So also in their hand-writings; though thousands shall be taught by the same master, every one shall have a method peculiar to himself, distinguishable from every other, and though one may occasionally counterfeit the hand-writing of another, it is done with difficulty, and the instances are scarce.

But let me be a little minute. I will endeavour to give you some idea of the mode in which the animal machine is kept alive annourished; and if this account creates your wonder, every other circumd stance concerning it, will do the same.

It is but late years that the circulation of the blood has been discovered. The heart of man is an engine always in motion, pumping the blood on to the extremest parts of the human frame, from whence it returns to the heart; and that nothing may impede or interrupt this circulation, which is the vehicle of life, Nature has supplied the blood vessels with valves that admit the blood a passage in the course of its circuit, but will not suffer it to flow back or return. Should it be

ſtopped in its progreſs, man would die. Theſe veſſels ſpread and branch to every part of the body, ſo that puncture at where you will, the blood will flow, juſt as if from a water-houſe, pipes ſhould be extended to every houſe in a town, to every room in each houſe, and to every bed in the garden belonging to it. This blood nouriſhes the body, but being ſubject to daily waſte, it is renewed by food. The nutritive part of ſuch is taken up by a multitude of veſſels that open their mouths into the great canal, through which it paſſes, and ſuch parts as tend not to nouriſhment are carried off. Many of theſe blood-veſſels are finer than hair, and yet life ſhall depend on their continuing ſound.

Here let us pauſe and ſtand amazed. When we take up a very delicate, tender, and complex piece of mechaniſm, we handle it cautiouſly, we examine it with care, we look at it with aſtoniſhment, and wonder it does not break even whilſt we view it. By the ſame reaſoning, when we enquire into the ſeveral parts of the human body, parts as exquiſitely fine as delicately formed, why ſhould we be leſs aſtoniſhed?---When we behold through a glaſs the multiplicity of fine tubes or veſſels, imperceptible to the human eye; when we find certain ſyſtems of ſuch veſſels, made for the different purpoſes, but all combining to the ſame end; when we conſider their infinite multiplicity and minuteneſs, and that the breaking, or tangling, or burſting of any of them, would cauſe inſtant death: and when we alſo take into the conſideration how careleſs man is of himſelf, and the number of accidents and injuries he is liable to; inſtead of being ſurprized at ſudden death, we may wonder it does not more frequently happen. Well might David ſay, he was "fearfully and wonderfully made." This is a ſtrong proof of the continual care of

Providence, who watcheth over our ways and guardeth our life, and this view of our organization ſhould teach us not to flatter ourſelves with length of days, but, being daily liable to be taken off, and our future happineſs or miſery depending on the ſtate in which we fall, to keep ourſelves always prepared.

The ſame foreſight, the ſame wiſdom is conſpicuous in every other part of the human frame. I might enter into the nervous ſyſtem, and ſhew you the uſe and contrivance of this, how that the nerves proceed from the brain and branch minutely and univerſally over the body, as do the blood-veſſels; and that the leaſt puncture wounds a nerve and occaſions pain; that they carry the ſenſation of pain to the brain, and ſo readily and exactly do they communicate their intelligence, that touch a blind man in any part of his body, and he will be able to ſay where you touched him. This property is one of the five ſenſes with which man is endued, I mean that of diſcovering by the touch the nature of that ſubſtance we feel, whether it be ſmooth or rough, ſoft or hard, hot or cold, wet or dry, and ſo on.

A ſimilar foreſight and wiſdom of the Creator is viſible in the muſcles, but more ſo in the limbs. The tendons or cords that draw them; the extenſors that ſtretch them; the joints by which they bend; the mucus that oils the joints, and the bones that ſupport the body; all have their ſeveral uſes, all their ſeveral ends; nor is there a part of the human frame external or internal, be it ever ſo minute, but is made or preſerved for ſome uſeful and indiſpenſible purpoſe. Indeed there are ſome parts of a man's frame that he may loſe and yet not be deprived of life; but the human economy ſhall ſtill go on. He may, for example, loſe a limb or an eye; his ſight or his hearing; and Providence will in ſome meaſure ſupply the defect.

We find it does, and where a man is unfortunately deprived of one sense, he has the other in greater perfection; he shall be able to hear with his eyes, and see with his ears, judging of speech by the motion of the lips, and distances, by the sound.

Once more; let us consider man in an embryo state, in his formation in the womb, and our astonishment will not be less; that like a seed in the ground he unfolds and expands; his limbs will be formed and fashioned; he will receive the breath of life, grow to an infant size, and be brought into the world in the course of a few months---What is this but Creation? and should leave no doubt of the formation of all things; for what is done may have been done, and what we see, we cannot disbelieve. Let the Atheist doubt now, if he can, the existence of the God who made him; he may as well suppose that a quantity of single letters of the alphabet, thrown up into the air, may fall down into an elaborate poem, as that the wonderful compages of the human frame is the effect of chance or any other wisdom than that of Omnipotence, the infinite Creator of all things---the God who ruleth the world.---How such a Being could have existed from all eternity, that is, have had no beginning; and what is eternity; how it came to exist, whence it derived its power, or when or how that power shall terminate---whether there were any pre-existent Beings before the world was made---whether there are more inhabited worlds than one---whether Christ descended on any world than this---or whether any other people stood in need of redemption, is not for man to know or enquire into; it is past the comprehension of our finite capacities, and is reserved for one of those beatitudes in heaven, which the good and just will enjoy hereafter. "We now see as through a glass, darkly, but hereafter we shall see

God face to face, and know him as he is." St. Paul tells us, that when he was taken up to into heaven in a trance he saw unutterable things; and why unutterable? because language having no words to convey their meaning, they were beyond the reach of human comprehension, as much as were we to attempt to convey the idea of colours to a man born blind.

2. Let us next consider the spiritual part of man, the union of the mind and body, and the operation of the will. Here we shall be much more astonished. God hath not only given us a Body but a Soul; the union of these forms the man; the one is mortal, the other immortal; and though the one shall die and perish in this world, the other shall live and flourish in the next. Hence our immortality, for the soul shall never die, but after the resurrection shall join those spiritual beings that compose the host of heaven. Now the seat of this soul is the brain, and from the brain proceed those nerves I have mentioned, that branch over the whole frame of man, and convey the will of the mind to the several parts of the body. The soul or understanding, says to the foot, move there, and it moveth; to the eye, look there, and it looketh; to the hand, do this, and it doeth it; and all this instantly and without reserve. We stoop, we rise, we walk, we run, and all in conformity to the mind; and thus does the body act in obedience to the will; and whilst that will is governed by the understanding, the actions of the body partake of rectitude and propriety; but no sooner is the understanding deranged or disordered, than the actions of the body are in disorder likewise, all in confusion, and partake of the distempered mind.

What a wonderful piece of mechanism then is Man! How worthy the hand of an all-wise and omnipotent Creator! Wisdom

fleeth when no man purſueth; but the Righteous is bold as a lion."

Pride, as a principle of Self-love, will keep us from falling, from degrading the dignity of our nature, and ſtooping to the level of brutes. Pride, under the government of reaſon, ſhews itſelf in keeping up the man, and preſerving the chriſtian; in a faithful diſcharge of the ſeveral duties of life, and in acquitting ourſelves well in our reſpective ſtations. Nay, it will go near to change a man's natural diſpoſition, will make the ſelfiſh man liberal, the cruel, merciful, and the covard, brave: but take it from the controul of reaſon, and there is no end to its evils: Envy, jealouſy, enmity, uncharitableneſs, diſhoneſty, revenge, poverty, and want of friends. "Pride goeth before deſtruction, (ſays Solomon,) and a haughty ſpirit before a fall."

Anger is another affection, riſing from hatred of evil, and tends to wiſe purpoſes, to the controul of thoſe beneath us, to the diſcouragement of vice, and the preſervation of ourſelves. Thus, under the guidance of reaſon, it becomes Diſpleaſure and Reſentment, but let looſe its reins, and it runs into Wrath and to Rage; and the vices in its train, are malice, revenge, murder, and all their concomitants. "The diſcretion of a man differreth his anger, and he that is ſlow to wrath, is of great underſtanding."

In an abhorrence of ſin, it is not neceſſary to Hate the ſinner. To err is the frailty of human nature, "We are Born in ſin," and if one man ſhall, by a power over himſelf, be Able to ſhake off that appendage to his nature, he ſhould, at leaſt, commiſerate the misfortune of thoſe who Cannot; he ſhould be tender to his fellow-creatures, and ſoften his hatred with Philanthropy. "Whoſoever hateth his brother, (ſays St. John,) is a Murderer."

It appears then, that the paſſions, and all their affections, under the government of reaſon, are Bleſsings to man; but when ſuffered to rage, without controul, they are curſes, and the bane of his happineſs. They tend to create him enemies by the offence they give; to diſturb his peace by the tumults they occaſion, and thus impede his welfare in the world; and I may further add, that experience has taught us that even his health of body depends upon a proper controul of them. If under no regulation, Grief will diſpirit him, Pride will fret him, Hatred gnaw him, Fear diſtract him, Anger will madden him, and Luſt wear him to the bone; but curb theſe unruly affections, keep them in ſubordination to reaſon, and ſerenity will beam in upon his countenance, ſerenity ſettle on his brow, and Joy revel in his eye;---he will be all harmony, all peace.

How lovely is ſuch a picture!--And how much is it not only our Duty but our Intereſt to ſubdue our affections and conquer our paſſions!---The taſk, with a little perſeverance, is not difficult, and the victory is not only honourable but delightful. Our reaſon was given us for this purpoſe, and if we make not a proper uſe of it, we counteract the deſign of our Creator, degrade our nature, and become "like the horſe and mule that hath no underſtanding, but whoſe mouths muſt be held with bit and bridle." Every deviation from reaſon is a degree of Inſanity, and he who abandons himſelf to his luſts, is little leſs than a madman.

But whilſt we thus condemn the healthy and the ſtrong, let us compaſſionate the feeble and the weak; thoſe who from infirmity of nature have ſtrong paſſions and weak underſtandings. Whilſt we guard againſt the ravages of ſuch men, let us be charitable, and pity their misfortunes. Reaſonable allowances ſhould, by us, be made for

their frailties and incapacities, and we truſt the goodneſs of the Creator will do the ſame. He certainly expects no more from a man than he has power to perform, "and in his wrath thinketh upon mercy." But on the other hand, "Of him to whom much is given, of him much will be required." We are not to indulge or give way to our paſſions, and plead an Inability to curb them. The very plea of inability is a ſelf-condemnation, and declares a knowledge of our ſin; and as a diſorder once known is half cured, we ſhould check our propenſities, before they get head, pray to God for ſtrength to overcome them, and never preſume to ſin againſt conviction.

And, when, we further conſider that the abuſe of our paſſions not only deſtroys our Temporal but our Eternal happineſs, when it is ſaid "They who do ſuch things ſhall not enter into the kingdom of God," it is a matter of too great moment to be trifled with; and a reflection that the wretchedneſs of Time ſhall be extended to Eternity, is an alarm beyond the power of human reaſoning to reconcile.

Truſler. A Manuſcript.